



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

National Park of
American Samoa

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National Park of American Samoa News Release

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Recovery Efforts Continue One Year After Tsunami

Wednesday marks the one-year anniversary of the tsunami that devastated American Samoa. The National Park of American Samoa and the local government recognize this as a day of remembrance to the survivors and those who lost their lives. Public church services will occur in villages throughout the islands.

Life changed for the national park and residents after a magnitude 8.1 earthquake triggered a tsunami on the morning of September 29, 2009. After a series of waves hit the islands, the park's visitor center, offices, vehicles, dive locker, and maintenance garage were destroyed; one-third of the park staff lost their homes; villages were destroyed; and 34 people died. Parklands and coral reefs were minimally affected.

While significant progress has been made toward restoring the park to normal operations, challenges persist including shipping issues, scarce local resources, and limited available land for a new facility. Today, the park headquarters and a small visitor center are temporarily setup in a former car dealership in Tafuna, an hour's drive from the park. Field and research staff utilize shipping containers for storage and operations. Continued recovery efforts will include the relocation of park staff to a more permanent facility sometime after January 2011.

The National Park of American Samoa was established in 1988 to preserve the coral reefs, tropical forest and archeological and cultural resources of American Samoa, to maintain the habitat of fruit

bats, and to provide educational opportunities for visitors and residents. National park lands and waters are leased from villages and the American Samoa Government through a long-term agreement with the National Park Service.

For more information about visiting the National Park of American Samoa call 699-3982, email NPSA_Info@nps.gov, or visit its website at www.nps.gov/npsa.

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